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## A study of problems faced by secondary school students in Sanskrit language

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### Abstract

India is a multicultural and multilingual country. Sanskrit is said to be one of the systematic language with few exception and clear rules discretion. The word 'Sanskrit' means prepared, pure, refined or perfect. It was not for nothing that it was called the 'devavani' (language of the Gods). Even NEP (2020) emphasized that sanskrit will be "mainstreamed" with strong offerings in school - including as one of the language options in the three-language formula - as well as in higher education. Sanskrit Universities too will move towards becoming large multidisciplinary institutions of higher learning. The present study was conducted on problems faced by ninth standard student in reading, writing, speaking, grammar, translation and curriculum of sanskrit language. The study was conducted using survey method. The sampling method used was random lottery method, ten secondary schools were selected from Mangrol taluka and twenty five students from each school means total two hundred and fifty constituted the sample of the study. The data analysis was done using percentage. The findings of the study revealed that the most of the students find difficult translation in sanskrit language while the average number of students had reported that it is difficult to speak in pure sanskrit language, they do not have interest in learning sanskrit, sanskrit language is difficult to understand, sanskrit grammar is difficult to learn and sanskrit textbook does not have enough information related to sanskrit grammar. The average numbers of students revealed that grammar should be taught by giving more number of easy examples from day to day life and teacher should provide more practice in reading, writing and speaking in sanskrit language in classroom teaching-learning process.

**Keywords:** secondary school students, Sanskrit language, multilingual country

### Introduction

Sanskrit has wide scientific literature and it is considered as an instrument of national integration. The teaching of sanskrit is important for the cultural unity of country. The Sanskrit language kept changing from around 2000 B.C. when the Rig Veda was composed to about 500 B.C. i.e. for about 1500 years. In the 5th Century B.C. the great scholar Panini, who was perhaps the greatest grammarian the world has ever seen, wrote his great book 'Ashtadhyayi' (book of eight chapters). In this book Panini fixed the rules of Sanskrit, and thereafter no further changes in Sanskrit were permitted except slight changes made by two other great grammarians, namely, Katyayana who wrote his book called 'Vartika', and Patanjali who wrote his commentary on the Ashtadhyayi called the 'Maha Bhashya'. Except for the slight changes by these two subsequent grammarians, Sanskrit as it exists today is really Panini's Sanskrit or Classical Sanskrit.

No doubt the first language of people everywhere in the world is the spoken language, but further development of thinking cannot take place unless there is a written language in which ideas can be expressed with precision. A scientist may think out new ideas in his mind, but these will remain rambling, diffused and disorganized ideas unless they are set down in writing. By writing we give our ideas greater clarity and make them coherent and in a logical sequence, somewhat like in a mathematical theorem where each step logically follows from the previous step. Hence for progress in science a written language is absolutely essential in which scientific ideas can be expressed with great precision and logic.

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### Importance of Sanskrit language

Sanskrit has an outstanding place in our culture and indeed was recognized as a language of rare sublimity by the whole world. Sanskrit was the language of our philosophers, our scientists, our mathematicians, our poets and playwrights, our grammarians, our jurists, etc. In grammar, Panini and Patanjali (authors of *Ashtadhyayi* and the *Mahabhashya*) have no equals in the world; in astronomy and mathematics the works of Aryabhatta, Brahmagupta and Bhaskar opened up new frontiers for mankind, as did the works of Charak and Sushrut in medicine.

Computers require algorithmic programming and scientific research has found Sanskrit to be the perfect language for this purpose. Its preciseness and variety owe to this research. Sanskrit is one language that can convey the biggest word meanings, quantitatively and qualitatively in the least amount of words. Owing to the abundance of words and preciseness of letters, it is most expressive. It is sometimes called the "poems of everyday life". Sanskrit has the largest library of words in comparison to any language. It is said to have 102 Arab, 87 Crore and 50 Lakh words (Hindi units have been used) that have been used via scriptures, books, speaking etc. In fact, professors say that a similar amount of words can be generated from these words within the next 100-150 years. In the modern world, we want everything fast and we want it now. To study a language like Sanskrit, one requires calmness of mind, patience and reverence for the language. This ancient science has been ruthlessly plundered, looted and misinterpreted by foreign plunderers who were unable to fathom the greatness of its existence.

### Rationale of the study

Sanskrit is the most ancient language and perfect among the great languages in the world. It is the greatest treasure given to the world by ancient India. Sanskrit is universally recognized as the language containing the earliest literature in the world. The discovery of Sanskrit as a sister language of the West made it an essential tool to understand the origin and early stages of the European languages, and European scholars began to study Sanskrit as their own language. Sanskrit is recognized as the earliest member of the Indo-European family by the world.

Sanskrit literature is an ocean that contains many pearls of wisdom. It is the source for Vedas, Sastrams, Kavyams and is the language of gods. Sanskrit has greatness in its formation and uniqueness of the grammar. The sound of each of the 36 consonants and the 16 vowels of Sanskrit are fixed and precise since the very beginning. They were never changed, altered, improved or modified. All the words of the Sanskrit language always had the same pronunciation as they have today. There was no 'sound shift,' no change in the vowel system, and no addition was ever made in the grammar of the Sanskrit in relation to the formation of the words. The reason is its absolute perfection by its own nature and formation. The morphology of word formation is unique and of its own kind where a word is formed from a tiny seed root (called *dhatu*) in a precise grammatical order which has been the same since the very beginning. Any number of desired words could be created through its root words and the prefix and suffix system as detailed in the *Ashtadhyayi* of Panini. Furthermore, 90 forms of each verb and 21 forms of each noun or pronoun could be formed that could be used in any situation. There has never been any kind, class or nature of change in the science of Sanskrit grammar as seen in other languages of the world as they passed through one stage to another. Sanskrit is the Divine mother language of the world.

People of every region in the country can easily relate with Sanskrit and that is the best tool to unite the country. There are many great works in Sanskrit. Our very Indianess is linked with that language. As the future generations have to study them, learning Sanskrit is necessary. The Nobel Laureate physicist, Dr. C.V. Raman, believed that Sanskrit was the only language that could be the national language of India. He said, "Sanskrit flows through our blood. It is only Sanskrit that can establish the unity of the country." It is true that a national language is a very important element in the growth and self-actualisation of a people and a nation. It helps to develop and also to give expression to their heart, mind and soul. Says Sri Aurobindo, "It is of the utmost value to a nation, a human group-soul, to preserve its language and to make of it a strong and living cultural instrument. A nation, race or people which loses its language, cannot live its whole life or its real life." A vast and diverse country like India needs a national language that can unify and harmonise. We have seen that Sanskrit was this great unifying force for centuries. Even when India was not a single political unit, Sanskrit made the Indian people one in spirit, heart and culture.

The first point which gives Sanskrit an edge over many other languages is its script. Usually Sanskrit is written in Devanagari. Which is easy to write and pronounce perfectly once learned. A recent research by the scientists of National Brain Research Centre (NBRC) have discovered that reading Devanagari involves more areas of human brain than Roman Scripts (please note, English uses a roman script). That means learning Sanskrit is a good exercise for human brain. According to them, In Devanagari, consonants are written in a linear left-to-right order and vowel signs are positioned above, below or on either side of the consonants. As a result, the vowel precedes the consonant in writing certain words but follows it in speech making it a unique script. "Our results suggest bilateral activation-participation from both left and right hemispheres of the brain-for reading phrases in Devanagari".

If someone does not know Sanskrit, he is obviously missing something. He cannot get the clear perspective of Vedas, Geeta, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Arthashastra and many other books, which are till regarded as the finest piece by a large portion of our society. Even though translated versions are available they always create a wall behind the reader and the original book. Even to be a master of subjects like Ayurvedic Medicine, Yoga, Indian philosophy, Vedic Mathematics or Astrology, one need to know Sanskrit to some extent.

Knowledge of Sanskrit helps one in learning other languages. It is now seen that knowledge in Sanskrit accelerates the learning of English. This news may astonish someone on the first glance. But, we need to keep in mind that it has a perfect grammar and nicely-built structure. Sanskrit provides a roadmap for understanding English. Besides giving a clear view of the structure of language, it also heightens "their awareness of the process of speech, creating a greater understanding of and ability to, enunciate words clearly." Not only English but it is easy to learn any Indian language once we learn Sanskrit because almost the grammar, pronunciation and script are similar to Sanskrit.

### Statement of the Problem

A study of problems faced by secondary school students in Sanskrit language

### Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study were as follows

- 1) To study the problems faced by secondary school students in reading, writing, speaking, grammar, translation and curriculum of Sanskrit language.

### Delimitation of the study

The study was delimited to the 9<sup>th</sup> standard students of Gujarati medium secondary schools of Mangrol taluka of Surat District following GSEB syllabus of the year 2018-19.

### Method of the study

The investigator had used the survey method for conducting the present study.

### Population of the study

Population for the present study consists of all 9<sup>th</sup> standard students studying in thirty, Gujarati medium secondary schools of Mangrol taluka of Surat District following GSEB syllabus

### Sample of the study

In the present study using random lottery sampling technique ten schools were selected and twenty five 9<sup>th</sup> standard students from each school was randomly selected as sample for present study. The school selected were Naninaroli welfare high school, sarkari madhyamik school Bhadkuva, shantiniketan highschool Zankhvav, sarkari madhyamik school Ghodbar, Shree L B shahvinayvidya mandir Kantvava, sarkari madhyamik school Mosali, Shree N D Desai sarvajanik highschool Vankal, APMC girls school Mangrol, sarkari madhyamik school Verakui, Shree V M Patel highschool Kosamba. So, sample size was two hundred and fifty students.

### Tools and Techniques

**Close ended questionnaire:** Researcher had constructed close ended Questionnaire for students and the same was personally administered on students, developed Questionnaire with regard to problem faced by students on reading, writing, speaking, grammar, translation and curriculum related to Sanskrit language.

### Data collection

The investigator took permission from principal of selected ten schools and on predecided time personally implemented the close ended questionnaire on selected students and collected the required data.

### Data analysis

The data was analyzed using percentage and mean.

### Major findings

Following major findings were drawn for the present study:

- With regard to Sanskrit books, 54 % of students revealed that they do not like reading books in Sanskrit, 52.40 % students told that they do not like questions asked by teachers in Sanskrit and 52 % students reported that it is difficult to speak in pure Sanskrit language.
- With regard to translation of Sanskrit in Gujarati, 67.60 % students told that it is difficult to do translation when you do not know the meaning of Sanskrit word, 58 % students reported that translation is difficult without knowing Sanskrit grammar and 58.60 % of students had told that translation of Gujarati into Sanskrit is also difficult.

- With regard to the Sanskrit, 53.06 % of students told that, they do not have interest in Sanskrit learning, 57.20 % students told that Sanskrit language is difficult to understand by only reading, 59.60 % of students reported that Sanskrit was not taught using appropriate pictures and charts, 54 % of students had reported that teacher does not ask any question while teaching Sanskrit grammar, 52 % students reported that in exam teacher is not asking any question related to grammar.
- With regard to the homework, 59.20% students told that homework checking was done by the student representative only, 54 % of students told that there is no vividness in homework given, 53.20 % of students told that after homework checking, their mistakes are not corrected by the teacher.
- The students had reported that the major problems faced were translation of Sanskrit into Gujarati, Sanskrit grammar is difficult to learn, Sanskrit reading is also difficult and difficulty is there in pronunciation of Sanskrit words. For the solution of above problems, students told that teacher should give more practice of translation of Sanskrit in Gujarati, grammar should be taught by giving more examples in easy language, students should be given opportunity to read Sanskrit in classroom and teacher should use proper pronunciation in classroom and allow students to practice it.
- With regard to the text book of Sanskrit, 54 % of the students told that Sanskrit text book does not have enough information related to Sanskrit grammar, 53.20 % of students told that text book do not have content useful in daily life.

### Conclusion

The present study was undertaken to study the problems faced by secondary school students in Sanskrit language. The findings of the study revealed that the most of the students find difficult translation in Sanskrit language while the average number of students had reported that it is difficult to speak in pure Sanskrit language, they do not have interest in learning Sanskrit, Sanskrit language is difficult to understand, Sanskrit grammar is difficult to learn and Sanskrit textbook does not have enough information related to Sanskrit grammar. The average numbers of students revealed that grammar should be taught by giving more number of easy examples from day to day life and teacher should provide more practice in reading, writing and speaking in Sanskrit language in classroom teaching-learning process.

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